

REMARKS

The present amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action dated April 19, 2007, which set a three-month period for response, making this amendment due by July 19, 2007.

Claims 1-13 are pending in this application.

In the Office Action, claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1-10 were further rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,508,571 to Shafer in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,339,871 to Maesoba and U.S. Patent No. 6,707,211 to Oohashi as well as over Maesoba in view of Shafer and Oohashi.

In the present amendment, the specification was amended to add a cross reference to the related priority document and to add standard headings.

Claim 1 was amended to address the rejection under Section 112, second paragraph, by rewriting the steps of claim 1 as standard method steps.

Turning next to the substantive rejection of the claims, the Applicants respectfully disagree that the cited reference combinations render obvious the subject matter of claims 1-10. More particularly, the Applicants submit further that the cited references all relate to completely different manufacturing methods for coils, so that the practitioner would not be provided with any suggestion or motivation to combine the teachings of these references. The cited reference must provide the practitioner some teaching or suggestion to use another reference. This is not the case here, so that a combination of the

cited references is supported only with knowledge of the present invention, which constitutes impermissible hindsight. When prior art references require selective combination to render obvious a subsequent invention, there must be some reason for the combination other than the hindsight gleaned from the invention itself. *ACS Hosp Sys., Inc., v. Montefiore Hosp.*, 221 USPQ 929, 932, 933 (Fed. Cir. 1984).

Even if the three cited references are combined, the result would not be the present invention as defined in claim 1.

The cited patent to Maesoba teaches the practitioner to crossover U-shaped conductor segments relative to one another (according to claim 1) and arrange them in stator grooves. After the windings with the winding head according to Fig. 13 are made, then separate, spaced conductor elements 330 according to Figs. 14 through 16 must be cut and are bent along the axial surface of the winding head, as shown in Fig. 15. Then, the individual connections are connected in a “parallel-star connection”.

Therefore, the practitioner is provided with no suggestion from Maesoba for forming a connection of an integrated star point by means of a connection ring, which is arranged on the inside of the produced winding head.

The cited reference to Shafer, in contrast, discloses an electric engine, in which the stator windings are wound, as describe for example in column 3, lines 9-16. After the winding process is complete, an insulating disc 22 is arranged via a connecting ring 24 axially above the winding head. With the manufacturing of the winding, an integrated star point of the connection is **NOT** produced; rather in

a subsequent process step, four individual wire ends are connected with the insulated sick and the connecting ring.

Shafer does not provide the practitioner with any suggestion of equipping an offsetting tool with these types of stamped wire elements, or that according to an offset process, an integration star point is formed.

Likewise, by disclosing the arrangement of the connecting ring 24 axially over the winding head, Shafer teaches away from the method of the present invention, in which the connecting ring for the integrated star point made with the winding is disposed within the winding head, on its inner side. This has the critical advantage that in this manner, the axial height of the electrical machine is reduced. The arrangement of the connecting ring on the inside of the winding head is only possible according to the present invention, based on the corresponding embodiment of the stamped wire elements for forming an integrated star point, so that these can be accommodated by the star-shaped bending of the connection ring.

Thus, even the impermissible combination of the Shafer and Maesoba references would not lead to the present invention as defined in claim 1, specifically, a connecting ring for an integrated star point on the inside of the winding head made by means of offset. Neither Maesoba nor Shafer teaches pressing the wire elements so that the slot space factor of the stator is optimized.

Oohashi discloses an embodiment in which the conductor pieces are reshaped in their cross section. As shown in Figs. 3 and 4, however, this does not relate to the region in which wire elements are inserted into the slot; rather

the regions of the winding head are reshaped by means of a stamping method, which only results in an improved deformability of the winding head.

Thus, Oohashi also does not disclose the feature of claim 1 in which the wire elements are stamped, so that the cross-sectional profile of the wire increases the slot space factor.

To more clearly define the above distinctions over the cited reference combinations, claim 1, in step c, has been amended to add “*wherein the integrated star point is made by offsetting inserted wire elements in a process step*”. This feature is disclosed in the paragraph bridging pages 7 and 8 of the specification.

In addition, new dependent claims 11-13 have been added. Support for new claim 11 can be found in the specification on page 7, first and third paragraphs; support for new claim 12, on page 3, third paragraph; and support for claim 13, on page 10, second full paragraph.

The Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 more clearly defines the above-argued patentable distinctions and that claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-13 are allowable over the cited reference combinations. It is respectfully submitted that since the prior art does not suggest the desirability of the claimed invention, such art cannot establish a prima facie case of obviousness as clearly set forth in MPEP section 2143.01.

For the reasons set forth above, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-13 are patentable over the cited art. The Applicants further request withdrawal of the rejection and reconsideration of the claims as herein amended.

Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to discuss appropriate claim language that will place the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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